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TOPONYMIC PROFILE OF THE SOUTHERN CARPATHIANS

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The complete occupied surface of the earth is covered with a screen of geographic names. Not one of these names was given by chance and each of them has a meaning and a significance.

The toponymic screen which covers the territory of Rumania is not only very rich, but at the same time, it is extremely varied. This is true not only in regard to linguistic origin but also in regard to the physiogeographic, economic geographic, and historic social meaning. The large number of toponyms in the territory of the Rumanian People's Republic shows us how much our people are linked to the earth from whence they sprang and were developed. Toponyms were born in the framework of the modes of production which succeeded one another in the course of history on Rumanian soil and in the framework of certain conditions of human inter-relationships.

Our obligation is to decipher the meanings of these toponyms, in order to reconstitute the conditions (natural and social economic) in which they came into being, to classify them according to their importance, and to give them a proper scientific interpretation.

Some of them show us how, within the relations of the production of a given historical epoch, the people began to use terms for certain areas (such are all toponyms which signify

deforestation: *runc* [cutting down the trees near a pasture], *curatura* [cleaning stumps out of a field], *garina* [an area where the forest has been cut and another forest has grown up], etc). Others help us in reestablishing the old networks of roads in Rumania: "*drumul olacului*" [stagecoach road], "*drumul sarii*" [bumpy road], "*drumul oilor*" [sheep road], etc. Others tell us of the currents and directions of the migrations of the people (as, for example, the names of the settlements in the Petrosani depression which are derived from Tara Hategului). Others tell us about flora and fauna elements which no longer exist (*Brebi*, *Briboasa*, *Bourul*, *Zimbrul*, etc). Others characterize the form of the terrain in a single word (as, for example, the names of the *Piciul* (little boy) mountains). Some tell us about the old occupations of the population from certain points or places (*Podari* [scavengers], *Stupari* [bee-hive keepers], "*Cremenari*". Others in the end quite equally constitute documents concerning the ethnogeny of the Rumanian people (*Schei*, *Peceneaga*, *Comana*, etc).

The study of the toponymy of a country is a difficult and complex task which can only be accomplished by collaboration between linguists, historians, and geographers. In his recent work, *Nume de locuri rominești în Republica Populară Română* [Rumanian place names in the Rumanian People's Republic], academician Iorgu Iordan acknowledged that under certain aspects "the study of toponymy ... presents great difficulties, which do not seem to me to be about to be overcome" (1) (page XVII).

The general scientific session of the Academy of the Rumanian People's Republic in March 1951, emphasized the great importance which a toponymic study has for Rumania, especially

for the explanation of the historical formation and evolution of the Rumanian people (2).

Today a group of members and collaborators of the Historical Institute of the Academy of the Rumanian People's Republic is working on the extraction of toponyms from the volumes of historical documents published in recent years, while the Linguistic Institute is also preparing to start on a study of the toponymy of Rumania, within the area of their competence. In this task the Linguistic Institute is also planning to solicit the collaboration of the geographers.

Moving on to the subject of our thesis, we will say from the beginning that the toponymy of Rumania's mountains is distinguished from the toponymy of the other large units of the relief of our country by the fact that for the most part it is composed of the names of mountains (oronymic) and the names of rivers (hydronymic), with the names of human settlements being, except for the provinces, either totally absent or very few. The toponymy of the Rumanian Carpathians thus has its principal linguistic origins in 2 languages, namely Latin and Slavic, while the linguistic origin of the toponymy of the hills, plateaus, and especially of the plains is much more complex. We must also keep in mind the fact that the toponymy of our mountains was created either by the static population of the interior depression or more especially by the population from the area of the lower depression, who lived in permanent contact with the mountains and who utilized the natural riches of the mountains.

In the following we will cross the Southern Carpathians 4 times and we will examine for each the oronyms and hydronyms

which we encounter. In other words we will execute 4 toponymic profiles.

The profiles will be executed for the following distances and directions: 1. From the issue of the Gilort (south) from the mountains, over the Paring Mountains and the Sebes Mountains to the issue of the Sebes River (north) from the mountains; 2. from Titești, from under the Cozia Mountains (south), over the Făgăraș Mountains as far as the Olt "country" (north); 3. from Maneciu Ungureni (at the issue of the Teleajen from the mountains), over the Ciucas, as far as Intorsura Buzăului; and 4. from Intorsura Buzăului (north) as far as Nenoiu (south) in the valley of the Buzău River.

I. FROM THE ISSUE OF THE GILORT (SOUTH) FROM THE MOUNTAINS  
TO THE ISSUE OF THE SEBES (NORTH) FROM THE MOUNTAINS

The highway called "Drumul Republicii" leaves from Novaci towards the north in order to cross the Carpathians diagonally. It crosses the Southern Carpathians at the point where they are the widest. As the crow flies this distance is about 80 km. On the highway the distance is 104 km.

We make the important statement at the very beginning of the road that in part of the area the people call the whole southern slope of the mountains "plai," beginning below from the depression and up to the alpine area. The word is used in the sense which the Greek term *plagion* and the Latin term *plagium*, from which we derive the word "plai," has had for 2,000 years, namely mountain slope. Just as important to remember is the fact that the term "plai" has an economic meaning. We say "plai" for all terrain which extends from the

villages below up to the mountain area, either hay meadows with shelters or only forests" (Learned from Satul Rugi (Craiova Province, Tg. Jiu Rayon).

At the 1,200-1,300 m altitude appear the first "mountains" in the popular sense of the term, that is, the first pasture areas, a kind of large meadow in the middle of beech forests. These however are not alpine area mountains, that is, mountains properly spoken of, but rather mountains of the "tara," [See Note] or mountains in the beech forest. At a 1,400 m altitude we find the first true mountains in the popular sense of the word. They are large parts of alpine areas descending from the upper peaks and penetrating into the coniferous forests in the form of peninsulas of meadows. Thus the limit between these forests and the upper alpine areas is not a straight line, but rather a zigzag line of reciprocal interpenetration between the true mountains and the fir forest. Also the smooth upper surfaces of the alpine areas are "large mountains" to the people. In this way the notion of mountains in the strictly popular sense corresponds to the geographers' notion of alpine areas (pastures). Similarly, just as the "plai" does, the colloquial mountain also has an economic notion. "Plai" is the hay meadow and the forest. The mountain is the pasture. Toponymy is a creation of the people and we must study it as such. ([Note] For the mountain people "tara" is any low region (intramontane or submontane depression or, more properly, plain) covered with fields and villages. Consequently by "mountains more of the 'tara'" we must mean the mountains nearest to the villages and fields of a sub-Carpathian depression.)

Up to Rinca Mountain (1,550 m), we pass near Cerbul, Cornesul, and Dilbanul mountains. Before us, due north, rises Mount Papusa, which the Road of the Republic ascends in serpentine curves to a height of 2,120 m. From Papusa or, even better, from Mount Igoiul, which is situated more towards the east on the right side of Latorita, the view on all sides extends over the most extensive alpine pasture area in the whole Rumanian Carpathians. Seeing it, you understand why in the past and today our country has had in the Paring and Sebes mountains its most intensely shepherded Carpathians.

Here is a list of the names of mountains known by shepherds from the sheep pens in the area of the springs of Lotrol, Latorita, and Oltet.

Balul, Boarnesul, Coasa Benghii, Boianul, Bora, Buha, Capra, Gilcescu, Carbanarea, Carbunele, Catalinul, Cerbul, Cibanul, Ciora, Coasta Crainicului, Coriciul, Cornesul, Cotisul, Cotisorul, Dilbanul, Dengherul, Deresul, Fintina Untului, Florile Albe, Florile, Fratostanul, Galbina ("Enul"), Gruiul, Hulusul, Iasul (Iesul), Igoiul, Larga, Licuriciul, Mindra, Micaia, Mirul Mare, Mirul Mic, Molidvisul, Mogosul, Muntiorul, Nedeiul, Negovanul, Pielisa, Paraginosul, Pietrile, Plescoala, Poiana Mierii, Praja, Pravatul, Radeiul, Salanele, Saracinul Mare and Saracinul Mic, (Mount) Seovergii (Seoverga), Sorada, Setea Mare and Setea Mica, Slaveiul, Slimoiul, Smida-Mare and Smida Mica, Stefanul, Timpele (Timpa Mare and Timpa Mica), Tartarale (we actually have 3 mountains with the name Tartaraul), Tausul, Teana, Tidvele (Tigvele), Tolanul, Turcinul, Tapul, Urma Boului (one of the small mountains, bore a "tara" mountain), Voisana, Zanoaga, and Zanoaguta.

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In total there are 70 names of mountains.

A more detailed study shows that about 50% of these names are of anthroponymic origin, that is, coming from the names of persons. They are the names of former sheepherders of these mountains. The name Coriciul, for example, comes from the personal name Coric (which is still encountered today at Bumbești de Jiu). The name of Sateu (existent today in the onomasticon of Banat), and the names Lasul, Mirul, Mogosul, Radeiul, Slaveiul, Stefanul, Tausul, and perhaps Cibanul [See Note] form part of this category. Of all of these oronyms 4 are the names of villages which were ruled over in the "Devalmasie" of the Corsorul, Igoiul, Licuriciul, and Serada mountains. All of the others are geographical names, properly speaking, that is, they were given according to the aspect (form), color, fauna, or vegetation of the mountains. The name of Nedeiul or Nedeia, which is of Slavic origin, recalls the old Carpathian "bartering of daughters" which still goes on today in some parts of the Paring and Sebes mountains (not that all of these respective mountains should be named Nedeia). The name of Mount Florile near the sources of the East Jiu is interesting. From historical documents we find that many of the oronyms with their origins in onomasticons have a limited existence. Many times when the mountain passes into the possession of a new ruler, he changes its name. First the ruler, then the name. ([Note] Mount Cibanul (not Ciobanul) is located northeast of Paring Peak, near Obirșia Lotrului. A second Mount Cibanul and a Cibanul Brook are located in the Sebes Mountains to the right of the Sebes River not far from the issue of this river from the mountains.)



It is easy to recognize that the names of mountains which come from persons exist at most the time when private property appeared. During the period of the disintegration of the primitive community.

Finally the number of onomastic oronyms increases to the extent of the development of slave production relations, if all of the conditions are more favorable for this. The 2 following historical periods, the feudal and the capitalistic, also favored the birth and preservation of onomastic oronyms because the continued development of the Carpathian pastureland progressively caused the entire surface of the alpine pastures to be swallowed up by an even larger number of owners and to be divided up accordingly into many more "mountains," each with its own name (of the respective owner).

Another fact easy to recognize is that before slavery, the names of the mountains had to be names of geographic characterization, names like Terna, Nopteasa, and Carburarea. Finally in socialism, when private ownership of the means of production disappeared, the onomastic oronyms coming from the names of the former owners became anachronistic. Instead there appeared a new category of onomastic oronyms coming from the names of men of science, from heroes of labor, etc.

In his work, Marxismul si problemele lingvisticii [Marxism and Linguistic Problems], I. V. Stalin showed that no people are formed from a single stock or from a single race of men. These multiple origins of the people are inscribed not only in their languages but also in their toponymy.

What do the numerous oronyms of the Paring and Sebes mountains tell us in regard to the origin of the Rumanian people?

These names are almost exclusively of 2 origins, Latin and Slavic. For example, names of mountains with (their) origin in the Latin lexicon of the Rumanian language are Carunarea, Florile, Nopteasa, etc, at a time when oronyms such as Pravatul and Tenna had their origin in its Slavic lexicon. The toponymy of the Paring and Sebes mountains betrays an intimate "Rumanian-Slavic symbiosis." Some of the oronyms have a Latin root and a Slavic suffix, for example, Micaia. Others have a Slavic root and a Latin suffix, for example, Slimoiul. This explains the fact that in addition to the oronym Nopteasa, we also have the oronym Tenna which signifies the same thing (dark mountain), saying it in the same sense. The last 2 oronyms very probably date from the epoch of Latin-Slavic bilingualism in Rumanian history, just before the tenth and eleventh centuries, when it was considered that the Slav population in Rumania had been assimilated by the indigenous peoples. Finally the fact that in a document of 1502 (3) we find mention of the names of the Ivahna and Suharna mountains (obviously Slavic names which no longer exist today) among the names of other mountains near the sources of the Citea shows us that in the more distant historic past Slavic oronyms appeared to have also been more numerous. All these facts show us that the role of the Slavs in the formation of the Rumanian people has been of particular importance.

In the study of toponymy another important question is: "How old are the respective toponyms and which are the oldest?" This question is also significant when we speak of the oronyms

Passing to the northern slope of the mountains crossed by the Road of the Republic, that is, to the north of the main east Jiul line, we find a situation similar to that of the southern slope and of the alpine peaks of the center of this great orographic massif. The names of the highest mountains to the north of the Lotrul have already been given in the list we supplied. The first mountain over which the road of the Republic passes to the north of the source of the Lotrul is Tartaraul. It has been said about this name that it could come from the Latin Tartarus -- "hell." However the geographical aspect of the mountains with this name belie this etymology since the Tartaraul Mountains are broad open mountains without caves or glacial mountain defiles. From the oronyms on the right and left banks of the Sebes River, in the valley where the Road of the Republic descends towards the north, we retain Batrina, Rilele, Cindrelul, Comarnicele, Costeasa, Dobra, Frumosa, Gropata, Gruete, Larga, Lupsa, Mlacile, Muncelul, Pirva, Pietrele Albe, Praja, Scirna, Sinca, Serbota, Steaua, Tomnaticul, etc. It is also observed that these oronyms are either of Slavic origin or Latin. Some are anthroponymic. Others are geographical in the correct sense. Cindrelul and Lupsa are of the first category. Lupsa is a personal name formed from the Latin Lupus plus the suffix of Slavic origin, sa (See the work by N. Draganu (4), page 484.).

Among the hydronyms retained are Cibanul, Bistra, Dobra, Frumosa, and Sebesul (the last 2 names being names of one and the same river). The first (Cibanul), which we also encountered as the name of a mountain near the sources of the Lotrul, appears to be the name of a person and is not encountered as such either

in the onomasticon of the southern subslope of the Parina Mountains or in the onomasticon of the northern subslope of the Sebes Mountains. A document which is actually half a millenium old gives it each time in the form of Cibanul, thus indicating that it does not appear to have any relationship with the appellation cioban (shepherd). Bistra and Dobra are names taken from the Slavic. The name of Sebes remains. The fact that this river is called Frumoasa (beautiful) in the area near the sources has caused some researchers to believe that the name Sebes is derived from the Hungarian word szep (beautiful) and thus would only be a Hungarian translation of the Rumanian name Frumoasa. But they have forgotten, it seems, that one of the principal tributaries of the Sebes is named the Bistra and that it is then much more probable that the name of Sebes may be a Hungarian translation of this Slavic word Bistra, which means "fast," as does Sebes. (See (1), page 9 for both hypotheses concerning the origin of the name Sebes.) At any rate the name Sebes has come from the overflow of this river into the Mures and as such need not be considered as anything but a local topical name, that is, coming into being in the geographical area of the Sebes mountains. It has come downstream to replace either Bistra or Frumoasa.

Within the toponymy of the Sebes mountains in the direction of our profile, we must also consider the names of the separate human settlements on the mountain heights which watch over the Sebes flowing toward the Mures Valley. These include Arsu, Arsita, Birsana, Batrina, Cujerele, Jidostinu, Loman, and Martania. Most of these have their origins in oronyms, that is, in the names of the places in which groups

of respective economies are situated. Only Cuj(i)erele shows the place of origin of the populace, namely Cujirul.

## II. FROM TITESTI, FROM UNDER MOUNT COZIA (SOUTH), OVER THE FAGARAS MOUNTAINS TO "TARA OLTULUI"

Titesti is one of the oldest villages of Lovistea (Brezoi-Titesti intra-Carpathian depression). If I climb from this village up to the mountain which borders Lovistea towards the east, from here on up the road to the peaks toward Negoilul is very easy.

The first important name however is that of Lovistea, which is still alive today in the speech of the local population as the proper name, the people's name, for the basin.

In a collection of travel journals published at Gras in 1830 there was printed among others a description of a trip made in Tara Romineasca in 1814 by a certain Ludovic von Stuermer. Passing through Lovistea also, he noted that "loviste" in the speech of the local population means "pit or trench with fish." If this reference corresponds to the facts, it means that the name Lovistea, which has been applied to the Brezoi-Titesti depression from the time of the establishment of the Tara Romineasca, need not be considered as an official name which came by way of the Slavic chancery of the government of that time and was imposed by the administrative organs of a people who did not know what "loviste" meant, but rather, it was first of all a live word in the language of the local population which the officials could do nothing other than adopt.

From the toponyms in the Titesti area the following are worthy of being retained: Fata lui Sfintu Ilie (a flat level area in the outskirts of the village, under a ridge), Cetatea, Dealul or Virful Tatarului, Oca (a forested ridge) and especially Tarurea.

Fata lui Sfintu Ilie is the name of the place at Titesti where on 20 July the annual bazaar of Lovistea is held. Local tradition says that this bazaar is nothing but the nedela (bartering of daughters) which was held in ancient times on Mount Fata lui Sfintu Ilie from northeast of Lovistea and which for about 200 years has come down to Titesti. We will come back again in reference to this general carrying down of the ancient bartering of daughters from the mountains "into the plain." The name of Oca is interesting and enigmatic (this is the name for a ridge with forests, but it is possible that at some time the name was also applied to the nearby brook). Confronted with this name, the geographer immediately thinks of the name of the Oka River, a tributary of the Volga, which, as we are told by academician E. Petrovici, the German Slavist M. Wasmer has derived from the same prototype which should also be suitable for the base of the Latin word aqua. However, if we presuppose that Oca of Lovistea is the same as Oka of the Moscow region, we would conclude that the former is one of the ancient Slavic toponyms of Lovistea, but we would be able to say that the origin of this word was also from the ancient aqua and, finally passing through the Slavic filter, reached the (form of) Oca in the same way that Aluta, passing through the same filter, came from Olt. Interesting also is the onym:

Cetateaus (the name of a height in the margin of the very ancient road of Lovisteu which connects Transylvania with Muntenia in the direction of Curtea-de-Arges. This name probably calls to mind a castle which formerly watched over this road in the Titești region). Virful Tatarului is also an oronym with a probable historical significance. The most interesting however is the name Tarurea. This is the name of the part of the deflection cone, downstream of the village, on which Titești stands. Actually the local populace never says only Tarurea, but rather always say "In Tarure" (the second term being considered however as a proper name). Similarly, they never say "Pe Tarure."

"Assistance in the solution of obscure toponyms," wrote V. Bogrea in 1921, "must be guided by historical documents. These documents often offer an archaic, primordial, or at least an intermediate form which denounces the origin. Moreover without them the most plausibly apparent etymologies can actually be false, and reversely the most nonverisimilitudinous can be actual proof" (5).

Just such a special case is presented by the toponym "In Tarure." Historical documents of Titești village show us that the actual "In Tarure" is nothing but a deformation in the speech of the local populace of the much older and geographically pure name "Intre Riuri" [between rivers]. These documents mention the part of the terrain which is in truth an interfluvial area of the confluence. Consequently it is a name from a very old geographic name born from the Latin lexicon of the Rumanian language and which is still met with in other parts of Rumania.

The most important oronyms along the road to Negoiul are Arsuri, Bilceriu, Grosate, Leurda, Morinto (all names of "hills," that is, of heights up to 1,300-1,400 m, predecessors of the mountains, properly speaking, as in the region of the first profile). From here on we encounter the following names of mountains: 1. from this place and as far as under the northern end of the Fagaras Mountains, approximately between 1,400 and 2,200 m high: Bajanea, Calugarul, Ciortea, Cloarecul, Clabucetul, Coasta, Cozia [See Note], Daescul, Grulul de Pravat, Fata lui Sfintu Ilie, Leul, Marginea, Misgavul, Mesteacanul, Titescul, and Zanoaga; 2. on the southern face of the peak, properly speaking: Boia, Budislavul, Cocoricu, Cotii (people say: the cheese-dairy of Coti, that is, from the Cotii Mountains), Fatul, Grohotisul, Miclausul, Negoiul, Olanul, Prislopul, Scara, and Stirinoasa; 3. on the northern face of the peak, towards Tara Oltului: Avrigelul, Clabucetul, Puha, Sarata, Surul, and Serbota. ([Note] Properly speaking, Cozia is not on our road, intercepting it from south of Lovistea. It is however one of the most well known and most frequently encountered names of mountains in the life of the people of this region, and for this reason we occupy ourselves below with its name.)

The name of Mount Cozia is an interesting case and for this reason we will continue on this subject among others in order to show just how necessary reliable geographical documentation is in the establishment of the correct origin of a toponym. It has been asserted that the origin of the name of the Cozia monastery on the shore of the Oltul must be sought in the Pecheneg or Cuman word koz (walnut; in Rumanian: nuca)



(1) (page 42), because originally the monastery was called Nucetul, but the document of 1387 already used the actual name Cosia, whose source is the Turkish koz "walnut" (1) (page 42). One must then point out that: "One does not speak however of a Turkish word properly speaking (that is, Osmanli), because at the end of the fourteenth century there did not exist in our language a single lexical element of Pecheneg or Cuman origin (1) (page 42).

We believe that the name of Cosia for the monastery in question is not a translation of the monastery's much older name of Nucetul, the identity of meaning in koz-nuca being nothing but a chance coincidence. Moreover we are not able to understand the translation of the name from Rumanian (Nucetul) into Cuman or Pecheneg (koz-Cosia) at a time (1387) when both of the respective Turanian peoples had already been assimilated and when koz could not have been substituted in any case for the autochthonous Nucet, especially since this name had been used in the documents as the name of the monastery.

The new name of Coria has taken the place of the primordial Nucet for a reason which we will call geographic. The religious establishment of Mircea is actually situated "at the feet" of Mount Cosir (we say "at the feet" even though this mountain is located on the opposite shore of the Oltul). We must admit truthfully that the name of Cosia for the mountain would have to be much older than the name of Cosia for the monastery. Cosia is a splendid mountain which dominates the surrounding area and which not only has its great importance in geography and geology, but at the same time has impressed the population at

the feet of the mountain by its appearance of being a powerful mountain and of being isolated from the rest of the mountains.

This being so, the connotation is that from the inception of the monastery the name (Nucetul) was replaced by the name of Cosia (the mountain) just because of its proximity to it, a proximity which could even have been one of the main causes why Mircea built the monastery in this place.

In this situation the thing that remains to be explained is the name of the mountain. It seems certain that it has its origin in the Slavic kosa (goat; in Rumanian "capra"), particularly since in the Carpathians we also have mountains with the name of Capra (even here in the peaks of the Fagaras).

It is interesting that this profile does not have such a large % of anthroponymic oronyms as the first 2 profiles. Regardless of whether they are anthroponymic or geographic, most of these oronyms have a Latin phoneme, followed by a Slavic phoneme. The name of Miclausul has a Hungarian appearance. Its origin is definitely in the personal name Miclaus, the Rumanian form of the Hungarian Micles. In other words it is a question of a Rumanian toponym with all the appearance of a Hungarian one.

We retain from the remainder as more important Fata lui Sfintu Ilie and Gruiul de Pravat. The former is the name of the mountain (about 2,200 m in height) upon which, in the past, the Carpathian bazaar of the region was held and which is ranked next to the oronym Nedea, from the preceeding profile, in its significance and social historical importance. Similarly, a common element for the toponymy of the preceeding and present

profiles is the oronym Pravat, with its origin in the Slavic term (appellative) "pravat" (1) (page 77 (text and note 1)) ("to walk on the ridge, along it we do not climb up towards the summit, we do not go down into the valley, but rather we walk in this manner, 'de-a pravatu,' that is, along the ridge." (Gh. Modrus of Perisani-Lovisteu, September 1953)), which lives today as such in the speech of the people of Lovisteu. Therefore in order to distinguish from the term lovisteu, which has disappeared from live speech, the term "pravat" still lives as such. Interesting also is the oronym Leul which the people of Lovisteu explain by a fantastic fairytale, but which is very probably of anthroponymic origin (3. For example the name of the family Leu is encountered in Gaesti Rayon.).

We encounter only one hydronym which is not at the same time an oronym, namely Topologul. The river with this name springs from the Negoilul and Scara mountains. Although it is called Topolog starting right from the feet of the Negoilul, Topolog is not a name "of this area," but a name which has come from the region where the river overflows into the Olt, because only there has the name Topolog appeared (1) (The Slavic word topol "plep" [poplar]; therefore: "the river with the valley full of poplars" (page 72). At this point we formulate and keep in mind the principle that in general the names of rivers do not spring from whence the rivers spring, but rather the names generally come into being near the mouth of the rivers or on their middle course and are carried from there towards the source.

### III. FROM MANECIU UNGURENI (AT THE ISSUE OF THE TELEAJEN FROM THE MOUNTAINS) OVER CIUCAS, TO THE BEND OF THE BUZAU

The name Teleajen, carried by one of our important Carpathian rivers, is the first name which is interesting. It is derived from the old Slavic *telega* and means "the river in whose valley there is a cart road." Of particular importance is the fact that linguists have also been able to specify the epoch in which the form Teleajen came into being, into the Rumanian language, from the Slavic "telega," that is, before the tenth century (I. A. Candrea, Probleme de toponimie /Problems of Toponymy/ (being printed), page 203).

Consequently Teleajen is one Rumanian hydronym of ancient Slavic origin. Its significance is particularly important in historic geographic and historic economic relations. It proves in truth that even before the tenth century there existed a Trans-Carpathian cart road in the Teleajen Valley between Transylvania and Muntenia. The Teleajen pass is also shown by historical documents as one of the oldest Trans-Carpathian commercial roads (6).

From Cheia over Rosul Mountain we reach the highest mountain of the Teleajen and Buzau groups, Ciucasul (1,957 m). It occupies a central position in the mountains between Teleajen and Buzau where it occupies a dominant position because of its height and its relative isolation. Both this mountain and the massif with the same name have poor pastures which are invaded by juniper trees and a hay-like grass which is avoided by flocks, and both have very few springs.

From Ciucas the view toward the south and southeast, toward Tatarul Mare, Tatarul Mic, Sîrîul, and Penteleul mountains is blocked. Toward the northeast we can see the large intra-montane depression of Intorsurii Buzăului unfolding (before us). To the north the large valley of Tîrlung(ul) opens up in continuation of the Teleajen Valley. To the west the view meets mountains with developed upper platforms extending as far as the Prahova Valley.

The principal oronyms of the Ciucas massif and its surrounding area are Bobul Mic, Bobul Mare, Babesul, Bratocea, Mount Cailor, Ciucasul, Chirusca, Virful lui Crai, Dragonirul, Dunăul, Plaiul lui Gherghel, Grohotisul, Hulița, Magura, Nebunul, Penteleul, Piatra Laptelui, Rosul, Sfîntu-Ilie, Sîrîul, Tatarul, Tatarusul, Tesla, Valea Stînei, "Tigăile" Mare and "Tigăile Mici, and Zaganul.

For the time being we are dropping the name of Penteleul and the name of Sîrîul, both of which will be discussed later.

Of the 21 oronyms (without Penteleul and Sîrîul), 14, that is, 66% are anthroponymic. The other 7 express either geographic character (Grohotisul) or other characteristics or phenomena in connection with the respective mountains, for example, Piatra Laptelui, Sfîntu-Ilie, etc. The last oronym (Sfîntu-Ilie) has the same meaning as Fata lui Sfîntu Ilie, the name of a mountain to the east of Lovîstea.

We will discuss the names Ciucasul and Tigăile.

Ciucasul is the highest mountain in all of the Carpathians between Prahova Valley and Ceahlău (1,957 m). It is situated on

the median line of the maximum heights and is on the frontier line of old Rumania and Austro-Hungary. However Ciucasul is not a mountain properly speaking, that is, what we have seen as the popular meaning of this term, an extensive pasturable surface which is much more a complex of sharp summits, devoid of vegetation and covered with gigantic arrow-like peaks jutting up vertically.

The name of Ciucas is interesting because of the fact that it is the first oronym of certain Hungarian origin that we have recorded in our profiles.

A Hungarian geologist named Balogh Erno, in an article entitled "A Szekelyfold kapulaban" (In the Gateway of Secuimie), has suggested that the name of Ciucas is probably derived from the Hungarian word csuka, pike, because of the fact that Ciucasul has some rocks which are pike-shaped (Note 1). Finally one other Hungarian scientist, Arvay Jozsef, has shown that the name of Ciucasul is nothing but the ancient family name of Csukas (Note 2), certainly, we add, the name of an owner of Ciucasul at some time.

(/Note 1/ From a letter by the geographer E. Molnar of the "Bolyai" University at Cluj, who has investigated Hungarian literature at our request concerning this name.)

(/Note 2/ In his study, "A barcasagi hetfalu helynere" (the toponymy of the 7 Cengae villages of Tara Birei), page 203 (from the same letter as above). It is probably a simple coincidence that the onomastic Csukas is derived from "csuca" (= stiuca /pike/ in the Hungarian language), the term from which Balogh Erno derives Ciucas "for its jagged rocks in the shape

of pikes." This comparison is otherwise very suitable, at least for some of the vertical rocks of Ciucas which we have compared to gigantic arrow-like peaks. However the rocks of Ciucas could have been named by chance after a property owner whose name meant stiuca [Rock].)

Tigaile. A curious name, especially since it is no longer encountered in Carpathia. Another of its curiosities is that the 2 mountains (Tigaile mari and Tigaile mici) so named, have nothing in common with a frying pan, that is, they do not in general have the form of gigantic excavations and do not present in their appearance the form of hollowed out places by which the people could compare them with frying pans. This oronym would have appeared, however, in its place if it had been applied to a mountain of the Fagaras peaks or of the Paring or Retezatul massifs where the sides of the mountains are scooped out by gigantic glacial cirques. But in the Ciucasul massif such forms are completely lacking.

Among the terms which our people apply to the jagged peaks, for such are the disturbing conglomerate rocks which rise up over Ciucas like a field of arrow peaks, is that of "tiglau" or "tsiglau" (1) [See Note]. However the plural of tsiglau is tsiglae or tsiglai. It is the very term which a peasant from Ciucas used in putting a question to members of the Institute for Geographical Research on 26 June 1953, when they were preparing to climb the jagged peaks of Ciucasul: "But why are you climbing up on the tsiglai?" (Page 23. Tiglau or tsiglau are variants of Cicalau (ibid) and it is interesting that even on the road from Ciucas to the customs-house of Buzau a smaller mountain is called Cicalaul.)

Of course, the name Tigaille could not be anything but a distortion of the form Tsiglai(le) and for the origin of this distortion there must have been an error in a cartographic transcription. To the cartographer the term consequently must have seemed curious and false (if he was not familiar with it) and has caused a case in which transcribing Tigaille instead of Tsiglaile has only spread an error. Finally tourists adopting the error on the map have copied it faithfully and thus popularised it in larger and larger circles. This error has finally been adopted by even the shepherds of the Ciucas massif, who, hearing that the "gentlemen with the map" said Tigaille, began to say it in the same way, forgetting the Tsiglaile of yore. (This case of the acceptance of a distorted form of a toponym by the very people who gave the original name is not unique. We ourselves have had occasion to verify how shepherds from Mount Curmatura Oltetului said Nedelea for Mount Nedeia because after seeing the incorrect form of Nedelea on a tourist's map they accordingly pronounced it as Nedeia and still do.)

We believe that this is the history of Tigaille and we propose a return to the correct form of Tsiglaile or Tsiglaile.

It is supposed that the name of Mount Tesla also presents a similar case. There is either a question here too of an error in cartographic transcription or perhaps it is a question of a Hungarian oronym distorted in the pronunciation of the shepherds and the Rumanian population in conjunction.

Other oronyms which we encountered on the mountain road from Ciucas and Vana Buzaului are Ciclaul (a hill) Fortois



(Note 1), Fundul mantelui, Plaiul (Note 2), Urlatorii, Poiana Cordunii (Note 3), "La Predeal" (a forest glade), Poiana Seziului, Pe Strimbul, Poiana Sipoatele, and Titila and Urlatoarea (the last 2 are the names of the 2 ridges between which the village of Vama Buzaului is located); also the hydronyms, piriul (brook) Boului, piriul Dalghiului, piriul Fetii, Larna, and Urlatoarea.

(/Note 1/ "Portois is a river with forests" (Victor Rohan from Vama Buzaului).)

(/Note 2/ "We say plai for poiana (forest glade)" (the same informer). A different sense therefore than to the west of Olt.)

(/Note 3/ Poiana Cordunii is located near the village of Vama Buzaului. At some time there was probably a military guard there at the customs house (from whence the name of the village) for the Pasul Tatarului (Tatarul Pass).)

The names of the human settlements from the region of the "springs" and of the "windings" of the Buzaul are especially important. They are Acrisul, Barcanul (-ii), Bobocen, Bradetul, Buscelul (Fundu Buzaului), Chirchitau, Ciurarnic, Crasna, Crivana, Floroara Mare, Floroara Mic, Gila, Intorsura Buzaului, Lalauci, Sarana, Sita Buzaului, Vama Buzaului, and Zabratau.

The entire district of the Intorsura depression and all the settlements in it, is called Buzaul by the local populace, just as the district of Birgaul is popularly called Birgale. Local physical geographical conditions on the one hand, and on the

other hand the fact that this depression is a continuation of Tara Birsei, support the conjecture that at least some of the human settlements here must be very old. Hence the interest in their names.

Of these 4 are connected with the name of Buzaul: Intorsura Buzaului, Sita Buzaului, Vama Buzaului, and Buscelul. The toponym Vama Buzaului has its origin in the fact that near the village with this name passed one of the medieval trans-Carpathian roads and there here was the place for customs (Vama means customs house). The name of Intorsura Buzaului is perhaps, because of its appearance, a very old Rumanian name, certainly as old as the village itself, which occupies the most favorable position in the entire region, the place where the Buzaul "bends" its course towards the south and where it has cut out an unexpectedly large valley. The name of Sita Buzaului still has not been explained by specialists. Buscelul however is only the diminutive of Buzau.

Of the other names of settlements 3 appear to be anthroponyms: Barcanul (Barcani), Boboceia (from the same family with the personal name Patocea, Cirstoceia), and Floroiaia (very probably "the wife of one Floroiu originally").

Acrisul and Bradetul are the names of brooks at whose mouths are located the respective hamlets. The first name appears to be derived by popular etymology from Agris (this is derived in turn from the Hungarian ageres (alder forests) (1) (page 31). The second name comes from the collective noun derived from "brad" (fir tree).

Crasna, Crivina, Ladauti, Ciurernic. The first of these toponyms can be derived either from the Old Slavic *krasni* (beautiful) or from the Bulgarian *krasen* (the same meaning) or more immediately from the Ukrainian language (cf. the Ukrainian place name Krasna) (1) (page 88). The toponym Crivina was probably given by the Romanian population since today *crivina* (thicket) is also an appellative in the Romanian language. However the toponyms of Ladauti and Ciurernic are very probably of Ukrainian origin, the first because of its suffix (The village Papauti is located to the northeast of Intorsura Buzaului, between Covasna to the north and Zagon to the south.), the second, both through its spatial proximity to Ladauti, and for the fact that the name of the Ciurerna tributary of the Moldova River has been derived by many specialists from the Ukrainian *chern* (black hellebore) (8). (It is true that in the Bulgarian language the black hellebore is now called by the same name as in the Ukrainian language. However it is admitted that the toponym Ciurernic of the Intorsura Buzaului depression is of eastern Slavic origin for reasons which we have explained. Weigand has shown in his other studies that the Ukrainian influence on the toponymy of the Romanian Carpathians stopped not far to the west of the bend of the Vrancea. In other words in the Intorsura Buzaului region we did not find ourselves on the right hand of this 11 it.)

No less interesting are the last 3 settlement names, Chichirau, Saranas, and Zabratau. All 3 have a Hungarian phoneme. Chichirau appears to have come from the Hungarian *Tekero*, valley with meanderings. It is very probably of this

origin since there are other Hungarian toponyms in this region, for example, Ciucas, Fortois, which we have mentioned, and another, Ghileos hill, for example, which is near Intorsura Buzaului. Moreover we will see that Hungarian toponyms enter this region and to the south of the Carpathians.

To conclude what has been said, the toponymy of the region of the bend of the Buzaul shows us that here we find a 3-fold Rumanian-Hungarian-Eastern Slav toponymic border. The eastern Slav influence has come from the east, the Hungarian from the north.

Some researchers have claimed that even the name of Buzaul could be of Hungarian origin (the Hungarian formation on the basis of a Slavic etymon) (1) (page 31, note 6). No one could oppose however any direct and complete derivation of this name from the eastern Slavic "if we admit that eastern Slavs lived in parts of the Buzaul in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries." However in our opinion the name of Buzaul could not be so new and it could not in any case be separated from the old Museos-Mbuseos as V. Pirvan has claimed. (V. Pirvan has claimed that the Rumanian name Buzaul could be a direct continuance of the "trac" which "sounds like Buseos but has been transcribed Museos in place of Mbuseos" (Iorgu Iordan, op. cit., page 41, note 6). Nor does academicien E. Petrovici exclude the possibility that the Buzaul of today could have been called Buseos in antiquity. However the actual name Buzaul "could not be in this case a direct continuance of the ancient Buseos which is a Slavic revision of Buseos, finally transmitted into the Rumanian language.") Otherwise it is known that the most enduring of the toponyms are the names of

rivers and most of all the names of large rivers, succeeding peoples on the shore of these rivers transmitting from one to another the oldest name and not giving the a new name for the rivers.

#### IV. FROM INTORSURA BUZAULUI (NORTH) AS FAR AS NEHOIAS (SOUTH) IN THE VALLEY OF THE BUZAU RIVER

The average altitude in the intramontane depression of Intorsura Busaului is 800 m. From Intorsura Busaului the river with the same name heads toward the south, cutting into the Carpathians transversally for a distance of circa 40 km as far as Nehoiias. At Cheia Busaului (the defile through which the river runs before its issue from the mountains) the altitude is 610 m. A national highway, built in the last decade of the nineteenth century, accompanies the river all along the course of this long trans-Carpathian penetration.

The villages with the names of Hungarian origin, Chichirau, Saranas, and Zabratau, are situated in the same part of the valley, between Intorsura and Cheia. This name seems to indicate an ancient current of the Hungarian people from Transylvania toward the sub-Carpathian region of the Busaul from Muntenia.

The names of the 2 nearby mountains Penteleul and Siriul also have the same significance. The name of Siriul has been considered moreover by Weigand as being of Hungarian origin. The fact is interesting, even if for the moment we should not consider it as anything but a hypothesis. The hypothesis however is supported, among other ways, by the name of Penteleul which also has a Hungarian appearance and brings us to the

name of Mount Bendeleul in the Aries Basin. (For this Bendeleul, probably an old form of Bedeleu, see Contemporanul [The Contemporary] 31 August 1951. For the probable Hungarian origin of the oronym Penteleul, we have the attestation of the name of Mount Mielausul near Patae Brook, which has its source in this mountain and which appears to be Hungarian. Patae with origin in the Slavic potoe (for this possibility see Iorgu Iordan, op. cit., page 70).)

Several km to the south of Cheia Buzaului the brook Hartagul, a name which also appears to have a Hungarian origin, empties into this river from the east. At the feet of Penteleul, in Cislau Rayon, is the village of Panatau. To the south and southwest of Cislau are the villages (and the brooks with the same name) of Laposul and Miresul. (Laposul has as its base the Hungarian lapos, swampy (Iorgu Iordan, page 35), but Miresu is based on the Hungarian nyires, birch grove. (ibid., page 58).) Both of these names are of Hungarian origin as is the name Chiojdul, the name of the 2 villages to the northeast of Cislau. The 2 high hills Ficusul and Catiasul, both with Hungarian physiognomy (at least through suffixes), are located to the north and northeast of the 2 Chiojduls.

We are continuing the profile on the other side of the southern limit of the Carpathians from this place, in order to show that the partial Hungarian toponymy is not fortuitous or inexplicable. On the contrary, as a confirmation of the fact, existing Hungarian toponyms enter, as we see, even into the sub-Carpathian Buzaul.

The toponymy of the Carpathians and sub-Carpathian Busaul need not surprise us since at some time in this region there existed a district called Secueni (or of Saacului) mentioned in documents as early as 1603 and abolished on 1 January 1845. Since it was called Secueni, the district must have had at some time a population, if not in the majority, at least partially Szekler [term used to describe people of Hungarian origin living in Rumania].

From the Szekler population of long ago in this region, the Hungarian toponymy which we have presented has remained.

How do we explain the existence of this old Hungarian population in a region which was called an entire district and from which we have been left a relatively rich toponymy?

In the southeast of Transylvania, to the right of the Busaul and Teleajen Carpathians there lived in the past, and today also, a compact mass of Szekler people. As a part of the Rumanian peasant population from Tarn Birsei left their native districts and crossed to the south of the Carpathians, shunning the feudal exploitation of Transylvania and establishing "Hungarian" villages in sub-Carpathian Muntenia, in the same way and for the same reasons a part of the Szekler population of southeast Transylvania crossed over to this side of the Carpathians, in search of a better existence.

This emigration from the north to the south of the Carpathians was facilitated by the natural physical geographic conditions of the Busaul and Teleajen mountains. In truth it had always been easy to pass from one part of the Carpathians

to another by the narrow passes of Buzaul and Teleajen, a fact confirmed by the great antiquity of the commercial roads along these passes. The old Slavic name of Teleajen, with its significance as a road for transportation, acts as a confirmation.

#### CONCLUSIONS

1. The toponymy of the southern Carpathians is very rich. In connection with this, we should recall the words of a Hungarian writer who, after having lived 15 years in the midst of the Rumanian shepherds of the Carpathians, wrote "there cannot be found anywhere on the face of the earth another people whose lives are so closely connected with the mountains" and also "in the regions of Transylvania with all their inhabitants of different nationalities, no one could know all the corners and hidden places of the mountains as well as the Rumanians who gave characteristic names to even the most insignificant peaks, growths, and brooks" (9).

This rich toponymy is the expression of the close connections which existed between the population of Rumania and the Carpathians, connections which had their origin in the natural conditions of these regions and which were very favorable for the development of an extensive pastoral economy which is one of the oldest and most developed in the northern hemisphere.

Up until a historic epoch not too far distant, these connections were also closer than today (we speak of the connection in the framework and conditions of the feudal system). These connections are referred to in some documents and in



particular in the numerous names for the Nedelea and Sfintu-Ilie mountains, even more than those names mentioned in our report (Note 1) and which follow one another almost without interruption from the Iron Gates to the bend of the Vrancea. On each mountain with this name there were held every year on the same date the so-called "bazaars of 2 countries," the centers of Carpathian exchange between the people in the lowlands and those on the 2 mountain sides, which had been running for about 2 centuries until the beginnings of capitalism in Rumania made them unnecessary and they came down from the Carpathians into the plains below (Note 2).

(Note 1) Only in the mountains between the sources of the Western Jiu, Cerna, and those of the Bistrita do we have at least 10 mountains which were named or are still called Nedelea. In a document of 1520, 3 mountains (called) Nedelea are mentioned here. In the Parang massif, a bartering had been held until a quarter of a century ago on a large number of mountains, while in the Sebes mountains, the bartering is held today on 4-5 mountains (on the mountains of Batrina, Dobroaia, Jigorul, etc.).

(Note 2) Thus for example the ancient bazaar which was held on Mount Nedelea at the sources of the Oltet is now actually the fair of Polovragi (20 July). The one that was held on Patru Iul Sfintu-Ilie is held today in these times at Iatesti. The one on Mount Sfintu-Ilie north of Ciampulung-Buscael is actually the fair which is held in this city on 30 July, and the ancient bazaar which was held on Penteleul is actually the "Carpathian" fair which is held annually at Iuzsau (21 June), etc.

2. Most of the southern Carpathian oronyms have anthroponymic origins, that is, they are the names of the former owners of the respective mountains. In this category are the oronyms Negoitul and Moldovanul, with the highest peaks in Rumania (2,535 and 2,543 m respectively). The first anthroponymic oronyms have of course appeared within the process of the disintegration of the primitive communal system of the native Carpathian population and to crystallize the slave-holding system, that is, the appearance of private ownership of the land. However, as the anthroponymic oronyms have in general a limited life (usually as the owner changes, the name of the mountain changes), it appears that most of the actual anthroponymic oronyms are not very old. (However some of these are attested to by documents as long ago as 500 years.)

3. Another category of oronyms is that which refers to the different geographical characteristics of the mountains.

(a) Oronyms which refer to the form of the mountains (Mucul, Retezatul, etc)

(b) Oronyms which refer to a characteristic element of vegetation (Purul, Scrada, Scorusul, Stevia). (We have seen that mountains in the popular acceptance of the notion are surfaces whose characteristic is the complete lack of arborescent vegetation. Stevia, Purul, and Scrada are actually the names of elements of herbiferous vegetation. Only Scorusul is an exception. Here it is a question however of mountains which have or have had in certain more sheltered points only groves of hemlock trees.)

(c) Oronyms which refer to a lack of vegetation, to bare rock (Peleaga, Custura).

(d) Oronyms which refer to a characteristic of fauna (Cerbul, Zimbrul, etc).

(e) Oronyms which refer to the colors of the mountains (Dealul Negru [See Note], Teana, Nopteasa). ([Note] There exist mountains with this name (Dealul) with a height of about 2,000 m and even some over 2,000 : (in the Sebes and Lotrul mountains.)

4. Oronyms with their origin in specific pastoral terminology (Balmasul, perhaps Bulsul, then Urda-Urdele [See Note], etc). ([Note] In the onomasticon of the population at the feet of the Parang (mountains) there exists however the family name of Urdea.)

5. In reference to hydronyms, it is noteworthy that the name of small streams (brooks) are the same as the names of the mountains from whence they spring (they are therefore loan names), and that as a consequence they are more recent than the corresponding oronyms. In reference to the names of the more important rivers, it is observed that they are not identical with the names of the mountains from which they spring, that is, they are not loan names but particular names. The fact is that these hydronyms have passed on up towards the sources of the respective rivers, coming from the middle or lower courses of the rivers where they came into being, for example, Topologul, Gilortul, Argesul, Oltetul. In view of this they do not, properly speaking, form part of the Carpathian hydronymy.

6. Another important statement, valid for the toponymy of the whole southern Carpathians, is that under the harmonious relations of the linguistic origins, there are 2 principal sources of these toponyms, the Latin lexicon (Romanian-Latin) and the Slavic lexicon (Romanian-Slavic). In spite of the fact that the basic terms, appellatives which cover the entire Carpathian region and the adjoining sub-Carpathian depressions, are ancient terms with their origins in Latin, for example, munte, pial, tara, nevertheless, the Slavic percentage of the oronyms and hydronyms is impressively rich. It is the expression of the equally important role the Slavic people have played not only in the formation but in the historical evolution of the Romanian people.

7. To the east of Teleajen however there also appear toponyms of Hungarian origin, beginning with the name of the oldest peak, Ciucasul. Of the 11 names of human settlements in the Busau depression 3 are of the same origin. A similarly new element in this depression is the appearance of toponyms of an eastern Slavic origin which are encountered here, with toponymy of a south Danubian Slavic physiognomy, the only toponymy apparently present in the Carpathians to the west of Teleajen. The Busau depression is thus presented as a region of toponymic crossroads. Here there are encountered Latin Romanian and Slavic-Romanian (of Slavic Bulgarian origin) toponymy with toponymy of Hungarian origin which comes from the north and with toponymy of eastern Slavic origin (Ukrainian) which comes from the northeast, that is, from the territory of Moldova. The Hungarian toponymy is also present to the south of the mountains, in sub-Carpathian Busau. Also in the

same places there also appears toponymy of an eastern Slavic origin.

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